



Press release

28.9.2015, Bratislava

Opening of educational trail at Devínska Kobyla

WEDNESDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER at 10am at Sandberg

Daphne - Institute of Applied Ecology opens interactive educational trail at Devínska Kobyla Nature Reserve in the vicinity of Bratislava. This reserve with its rare steppe fauna and flora belongs to the most unique and most visited nature treasures of the capital. However, also to the most endangered ones. Daphne - IAE believes nature trail will help to raise public awareness and get support to maintain the valuable habitats.

Large areas of natural meadows that formerly were regularly cut or grazed have been abandoned. The protected species of plants and animals are endangered by invasion of bushes and trees causing decrease in the area of meadow habitats. Visitors often walk out of marked pathways.

“Public awareness about Devínska Kobyla is very low despite its high natural values” said Jan Seffer, Director at Daphne. Therefore **an educational trail** has been established at the reserve to inform the public about species of plants and animals found at the site and to attract and encourage visitors to stay on the marked pathway. There are interactive learning tools and information boards along the trail in both Slovak and English.

The trail consists of five main sections:

1) **The Prehistoric World**

Journey back through time to discover the creatures that lived long ago by digging for fossils in the sand or walking the “paleo-path”.

2) **The Insect Empire**

Discover the diverse insect hides by visiting the insect hotel. Here you will be amazed at our oil beetle structure made from the trunk of an oak tree.

3) **The Grazing Station**

Check out the resident goat herd and learn about their role to the restoration of the plant communities at Devínska Kobyla.

4) **The Steppe Path**

Read about the Steppe habitats of Devínska Kobyla and the interesting species you can find here.

5) **The Forest Trail**

Trek through the forest and try to identify the plants and animals on our information displays.

Large areas of former meadows have presently turned into shrub lands and even forests. This process is ongoing and its speed is dependent on various factors including mowing and grazing.



In order to stop negative impact on nature reserve, a restoration of mowing or grazing activities and raising public awareness are among the most urgent steps to be taken.

The activities to save the unique natural values of Devinska Kobyla Nature Reserve, have been supported by EU LIFE project entitled “*Restoration of NATURA 2000 sites in cross-border Bratislava capital region*” and also by the DBU foundation (Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt) via project entitled “*Protection of species and habitats in the national nature reserve Devinska Kobyla in Slovakia*”. The activities aiming to restore and protect Devinska Kobyla Nature Reserve are co-financed by the Ministry of Environment.

This trail is both informative and engaging; ideal for families visiting the area. The official opening of this exciting new nature trail will take place on **WEDNESDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER at 10am at Sandberg** (entrance to Devínska Kobyla from Devínska Nova Ves) and we invite everyone along to explore Devinska Kobyla.

For more information please contact:

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Annex:

I. Photo documentation

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Interactive information panel at Devínska Kobyla



Information panel above Sandberg



Information panel about rare species



Wooden statue of an oil beetle



Devínska Kobyla hill



Xerothermic meadows with rare species

